UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,598	07/02/2003	Jack L. Meador	10018099-1	4842

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HEWLETT PACKARD COMPANY
P O BOX 272400, 3404 E. HARMONY ROAD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION
FORT COLLINS, CO 80527-2400

EXAMINER
NGUYEN, ALLEN H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2625	

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
08/08/2008	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

JERRY.SHORMA@HP.COM
mkraft@hp.com
ipa.mail@hp.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/612,598	MEADOR ET AL.
	Examiner	**Art Unit**
	ALLEN H. NGUYEN	2625

Office Action Summary

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _13 May 2008_.
2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.
3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) _6,9,13,14,26,29,30 and 32-34_ is/are pending in the application.
  4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5)☒ Claim(s) _6,9,13 and 26,29-30, 32-33_ is/are allowed.
6)☒ Claim(s) _14 and 34_ is/are rejected.
7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on _02 July 2003_ is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.
  Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
  Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:
    1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
    3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
  * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
  Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
  Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1.   A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this

application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action

has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on

05/13/2008 has been entered. Currently, claims 6, 9, 13-14, 26, 29-30, 32-34 are

pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3.   Claims 14, 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Hasegawa et al. (US 5,666,191) in view of Gary Stringham and Bert Newell (2001RD-

447077).

Regarding claim 14, Hasegawa '191 discloses a method of preventing

comprehension of a printed document (Fig. 4), the method comprising:

feeding a printed document into a device having a printing mechanism (i.e., each paper sheet P is fed into the information concealing printing unit 7 where the paper sheet P is fed into the nip between the printing rollers 23, and the two sides of the paper sheet are printed with image concealing patterns over the information already printed on the paper sheet. As a result, the information concealing patterns are written over the information already printed on the paper sheet, and make it totally unreadable; Col. 7, lines 46-53, and fig. 12, paper feed unit 1);

scanning the printed document to produce at least one of an image file or an electronic text file of the printed document (i.e., the sheet printed information obliterating device may be conveniently incorporated with a printer serving as an output unit of a computer, or a copier, in particular a digital copier which electronically reads an original image and duplicates such an image according to the electronic data obtained by electronically reading the original. By doing so, the capability of the printer or the copier to form images can be used for the dual purposes of obliterating information by covering it up with another image and printing information supplied from a computer or an optical scanner; Col. 2, lines 58-67 and Col. 3, lines 1-2, and figs. 4-5);

identifying from the image file at least one graphic portion of the printed document as at least one target portion of the printed document (i.e., it is also possible to automatically distinguish and recognize the kind of letters and image patterns used in the paper sheet for expressing the information with a pattern recognition unit 105 according to the data obtained by the information reading unit 5, and to select an information concealing pattern with an information concealing pattern generating unit

106 from a font storage unit 120 according to the result of the distinguishing and

recognition process by the pattern recognition unit 105 so that an optimum information

concealing pattern may be selected according to the kind of letters expressing the

information, the line pitch and the character pitch, and may be supplied to the printer

108; Col. 12, lines 60-67 and Col. 13, lines 1-5, fig. 13);

printing, via the printing mechanism, at least one obfuscation pattern onto the at

least one target portion to prevent comprehension of the printed document (i.e.,

supplying the information concealing pattern to the information concealing printing

means; Col. 2, lines 52-53), including:

selecting a graphic manipulation pattern configured to use a modified

duplicate of the at least one graphic portion as the at least one obfuscation pattern (i.e.,

the information concealing pattern of the information concealing printing unit 7 may

consist of any pattern suitable for concealing the information expressed by the

characters, letters and other symbols printed on the paper sheet P such as a solid dark

pattern, a halftone pattern, a fine geometric pattern, an irregular pattern, an irregular

stripe pattern or characters or letters including a large number of lines, and of a size

similar to the letter or the symbol to be concealed, which are arranged at a fine

character pitch and at a small line spacing; Col. 4, lines 63-67 and Col. 5, lines 1-5), the

graphic manipulation pattern including at least one of a mirror image of the at least

one graphic portion, a complementary image of the at least one graphic portion (i.e.,

concealing patterns stored in the information concealing pattern storage unit 187 may

consist of patterns which are capable of rendering the character and other information

printed on a sheet of paper or the like unreadable by being printed thereover, such as

solid patterns, halftone patters, fine geometric patterns, irregular dot patterns, irregular

stripe patters; Col. 16, lines 1-5), a rotated image of the at least one graphic portion, a

negative image of the at least one graphic portion, and a scrambled image of the at

least one graphic portion;

Hasegawa '191 does not explicitly show <u>shredding the printed document</u>, and

<u>preventing reconstruction of the shredded printed document.</u>

However, the above-mentioned claimed limitations are well known in the art as

evidenced by Gary Stringham and Bert Newell (2001RD-447077). In particular,

Research Disclosure Database Number (2001RD-447077) teaches:

<u>shredding the printed document</u> (i.e., the device sends the undesired pages to

the shredder bin; Page 1),

<u>preventing reconstruction of the shredded printed document</u> (i.e., used for a

printer that is a shredder, just like a normal office shredder used to shred confidential

documents; Page 1).

In view of the above, having the system of Hasegawa and then given the well-

established teaching of Pub No. (2001RD-447077), it would have been obvious to one

having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to modify the

system of Hasegawa as taught by Pub No. (RD-0447077) to include: <u>shredding the</u>

<u>printed document</u>, and <u>preventing reconstruction of the shredded printed document,</u>

since Gary Stringham and Bert Newell stated in the first paragraph that such a

modification would be the ideal is to have an external paper handling output device

connected to a printer that is a shredder, just like the normal office shredder used to shred confidential documents.

Regarding claim 34, Hasegawa '191 discloses the method wherein the at least one obfuscation pattern comprises two or more different obfuscation patterns (i.e., the information concealing patterns are written over the information already printed on the paper sheet, and make it totally unreadable; Col. 7, lines 50-53).

4.   The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 6, 9, 13, 26, 29-30, 32-33 are allowed.

Regarding claim 6, the closest prior art Hasegawa et al. (US 5,666,191) fails to show or fairly suggest a method of preventing comprehension of a printed document, the method comprising: <u>the first pattern of symbols including a line spacing, a paragraph spacing, and a margin spacing of the printed document, wherein the symbols of the first pattern include at least one of characters or numerals.</u>

Regarding claim 9, the closest prior art Hasegawa et al. (US 5,666,191) fails to show or fairly suggest a method of preventing comprehension of a printed document, the method comprising: selecting a negative image of at least one identified character of the printed document and printing the negative image about the at least one identified character of the printed document to produce a substantially uniform thickness of ink or toner for the combination of the at least one identified character and the negative image

of the at least one identified character on the printed document, wherein the whitespace portion comprises an area surrounding the at least one identified character and defined by the printed negative image of the identified character;

randomly selecting characters and printing strings of the selected characters at randomly selected angles on the printed document; and

randomly selecting characters and printing the selected characters individually at angles rotated relative to existing characters of the printed document;

Regarding claim 13, the closest prior art Hasegawa et al. (US 5,666,191) fails to show or fairly suggest a method of preventing comprehension of a printed document, the method comprising: randomly selecting a plurality of content-free words and printing the selected words in a non-grammatical order as the at least one obfuscation pattern in the at least one whitespace portion of the printed document with the selected words printed in at least one of a repeating pattern and a non-repeating pattern.

Regarding claim 26, the closest prior art Hasegawa et al. (US 5,666,191) fails to show or fairly suggest a computer readable medium having computer-executable instruction for performing a method of obfuscating a printed document, the method comprising: manipulating the word pattern includes selecting a plurality of words, blackouts, and overstrike characters for overprinting onto the at least one whitespace portion and the at least one text portion to obfuscate natural language word groupings of the text portion of the printed document.

Regarding claims 29-30, 32-33, claims 29-30, 32-33 are allowable due to dependence from their respective base claims.

Conclusion

5.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Rua, Jr. et al. (US 5,681,065) discloses recyclable instant scratch-off lottery ticket with improved security to prevent unauthorized detection of lottery indicia.

Brooks et al. (US 2002/0153721) discloses method of making a hidden image game piece.

Taylor (US 5,184,849) discloses security system method and article for photocopiers and telefax machines.

6.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ALLEN H. NGUYEN whose telephone number is (571)270-1229. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 9:00 AM-6:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, King Poon can be reached on (571)-272-7440. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a

USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information

system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/King Y. Poon/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2625

/Allen H Nguyen/
Examiner, Art Unit 2625